

# **The United Farmer**

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The Canadian  
Farm Writers' Federation  
herby awards

Honorable Mention

to  
Alice Switzer

for

CLASS VIII COMPANY OR  
INSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION

 November 27/90  
*R. Thompson*  
*W. H. H. H.*

# In 1983

A warm and sincere wish for a merry, merry Christmas and may the New Year bring you health and happiness.

Alice Switzer

## Alice Switzer

# UFA Opens 28th and 29th Farm Supply Centres in Alberta



Lorne Hittinger, Manager Ponoka Farm Supply Centre.

Lorne began his career with the Farm Supply Division in 1972. He served as a Customer Sales Rep. in Edmonton and Claresholm. He was promoted to Assistant Manager in Edmonton and then became Manager of the Falher Centre. In 1983, Lorne was appointed Manager of the Ponoka Farm Supply Centre.



## On staff at Ponoka

Back Row: Mervin Hitchcock, Customer Sales Rep.; Bill Hutchison, F.D.D. Rep.; Lorne Hittinger, Manager; Ross Dewald, Customer Service Rep.

Front Row: Haavard Williksen, Customer Service Supervisor; Bob Taylor, Customer Service Rep.; Dallas Rose, Administrative Clerk; Andy Nagel, Customer Sales Rep.

## Ponoka

UFA's 28th Farm Supply Centre was officially opened at Ponoka on October 4th, 1983. United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited, in business to serve the farmers and ranchers of Alberta, is pleased to open its 28th Farm Supply Centre in Ponoka.

For nearly three decades UFA has had a close and congenial business relationship with **Ponoka Co-op Oils**, which is one of the Affiliated Co-ops associated with UFA. **Roy Vold** of Ponoka is the Co-op District #2 Delegate and represents Ponoka Co-op Oils on UFA's Delegate body. Roy Vold's father,

the late Roy Vold, served for many years as president of Ponoka Co-op Oils and was instrumental in organizing this association. Another prominent Albertan, **Donald Hoar** of Ponoka has now served as president for many years. The capable Petroleum Manager is **Alex Williamson**, who joined Ponoka Co-op Oils in 1962. The dedication to "efficient and honest" service has earned for Ponoka Co-op Oils membership, each year, in the Petroleum Division's 5 Million Litre Club.

Ponoka Co-op Oils — an excellent example of an efficient petro-

leum member association of United Farmers of Alberta.

The town of Ponoka was incorporated in 1904. Prior to receiving the name "Ponoka" which means 'elk' in the Blackfoot language, it was called Siding #14 on the old CPR line.

Ponoka residents feel they have all the amenities of the large cities but that Ponoka is small enough to have few of their disadvantages.

Ponoka is an active town surrounded by a durable agricultural community and the beautiful green parkland of the Battle River.



# At the Ponoka Opening



Ponoka Mayor Norm Nelson.

Delegates Joe Seidl, Ponoka and Alf Hammer, Olds; 1st Vice-president John Onyschuk, Radway and 2nd Vice-president Norman White, Innisfail.



Anyone would recognize a proud grandmother.



UFA Director Elwood Galloway, Fort Saskatchewan.



John Lee, Manager of FDD and Roy Vold, Ponoka Co-operative District Delegate.



Roland Coderre, Edmonton Farm Supply Manager, Tim Tubbs, Camrose Farm Supply Manager and Garry Sweet, Region Manager, North — busy - busy - busy.

# "The Best Little Town in Alberta"

As more settlers arrived in Alberta, stage coach service was started weekly between Edmonton and Calgary. The year was 1883. Coaches left Monday and arrived Friday. The one way trip was 25 dollars for the five day trip and baggage allowance was 100 pounds.

The first train trip between Calgary and Edmonton took twelve hours and Olds was the sixth siding. It was named after George Olds, a CPR traffic manager.

**Mrs. Josephine Benedek** of Olds kindly sent this and other very interesting information on Olds — its beginnings and its growth. We're sorry that, due to space limitations, we can't print all of it. As an added note to her research on Olds, Mrs. Benedek wrote, "The population of Olds today is nearly 5,000. A real asset to the town is the Olds College. Olds is certainly a great place; people are so friendly. We have the mountains and scenery to the west,

we're close to the city and there's unlimited opportunity for us at the Olds College. I guess Olds is just about the best little town in Alberta."

## Olds

UFA assumed operations of the Agro and Service Centre in Olds, which it purchased from the Olds Co-op Association, on May 24, 1983.

The official opening of UFA's 29th Farm Supply Centre was held on October 5, 1983.

The UFA Agent at Olds since 1959 has been **Russ Wilson**. Not only is Russ one of UFA's top Agents in Alberta, he has been an ardent worker in the Olds community. His code of ethics over the years "Give a customer honest value for what he gets and try to give him the best service you can give" has earned for Russ, membership in the Petroleum Division's 5 M Litre Club since its instigation.



*Gary Scholer, Manager, Olds Farm Supply Centre*

**Gary joined UFA as a Customer Sales Rep. at the Hanna Centre in 1973. In 1976 he was promoted to Assistant Manager at Vermilion, in 1980 was appointed Manager of the new Trochu Centre and in 1983 he became the Manager at the Olds Farm Centre.**



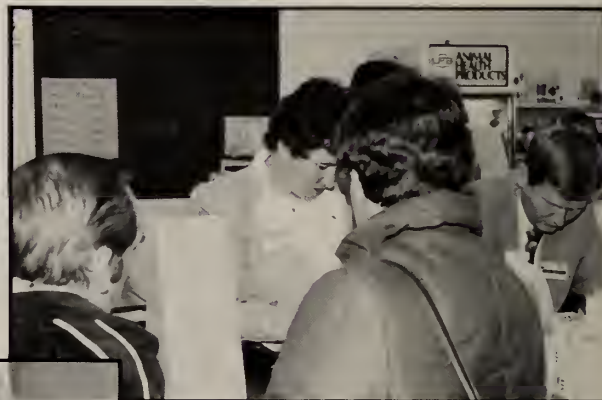
*On staff at the Olds Farm Supply on opening day: Janice Ingram, Customer Sales Rep.; Keith Campbell, Customer Sales Rep.; Shayne Coates, Customer Sales Rep.; Weslie Field, Customer Service Supervisor; Connie Boychuk, Administrative Clerk; Dwayne Tate, Customer Service Rep.; Russel Roe, Customer Service Rep.*



# At the Olds Opening



Mayor Bob Armstrong and UFA Delegate Alfred Hammer.



Farm Supply Managers Ginny Walker, Trochu and Don Bakken, Calgary.



Always time for a little discussion on the harvest.



A brief visit from Doug Arnot, Credit Department and Jim Prichard, Credit Department Manager.



"Digging in" to pick another prize winner as Keith Tully, Information Service Rep. looks on.

2nd Vice-president Norman White, Innisfail, introducing the Mayor, Delegates Alf Hammer, Olds; Allan Sveinson, Innisfail and Director Allan Sinclair, Vulcan.



# Farmstead Development Department

The Farmstead Development Department in Red Deer has an able Customer Sales Representative stationed in Olds — **Doug Artindale**. He will be glad to discuss any of your building needs with you when you're at the Olds Farm Supply Centre.

If you're in Ponoka, veteran **Bill Hutchison**, will be there to give you competent advice on any farmstead development you might be considering.

## UFA's Farm Supply Centres, Farmstead Development Departments and Facilities.

### Year Opened

1954	— Calgary
1957	— Edmonton
1960	— Grande Prairie
1961	— Red Deer
1962	— Lethbridge
1964	— Camrose — Grimshaw — Vermilion
1965	— Hanna — Stettler
1966	— Westlock
1967	— Provost
1968	— Vulcan
1969	— Falher — FDD Calgary — FDD Edmonton — FDD Red Deer
1972	— Airdrie — FDD Lethbridge — Spruce Grove
1973	— Farm Machinery Facility, Spruce Grove — Oyen
1974	— Claresholm — Two Hills
1976	— Consort — FDD Camrose — Distribution Centre, Edmonton — FDD Stettler — Glendon
1977	— Fairview — FDD Vermilion
1980	— Athabasca — Trochu
1981	— High River
1982	— Taber — Brooks
1983	— Ponoka — Olds

## FDD at the Openings



*Livestock handling equipment  
— FDD has it all!*



*Left to right — John Lee, Gordon  
Blades and Bill Hutchison.*



*Jim Calder demonstrating  
Roundup's popular squeeze-chute.*



*Bob Anderson — Ralgro Sales Rep.  
and UFA's Larry Firmston.*



*"Take it from me — Roundup's  
squeeze chute takes away stress  
and strain."*



# Agents of the Month

From 1900 to 1915, the combined efforts of government, railways and free-lance land agents lured more than one million immigrants to the

**More than one million immigrants were lured to the prairie provinces.**

prairie provinces. Nothing to compare with this great mass migration into western Canada during the first decades of the twentieth century had ever happened before. People were enticed into tearing up their roots to journey across half a continent or halfway round the world, to a land where very little had been done by anyone to prepare for their arrival.

George Karpyshyn's father Andrew was only nine years old when he came from Europe with his parents in 1909 to the Spedden area. The family cleared the land and built their own log shack. The first crop they tried to raise on their new land was corn.

George was born in Vilna and grew up on the family farm. For the first five years, he and his brothers and sisters walked six miles to the school in Ashmont — summer and winter. Eventually the family was able to get a buggy and release one of the horses to drive the children to school. Prior to this the horses were needed for work on the farm. George went on to get his certificate in Motor Mechanics from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and worked for about three years at Jenner Motors in Edmonton.

Irene Karpyshyn, George's wife, is also from the Vilna area. She too remembers that in order to get to school she and her brothers and sisters (there were eight in the

Flondra family) walked 3½ miles to school. There were no roads, but eventually a school bus was started — even though it only drove the children part way. Irene had a solid farm upbringing. The four girls were the oldest in the family so the girls worked the threshing machine. Before the children went to school, there were cows to be milked and in addition, Mr. Flondra kept about 30 head of cattle.

Irene left the farm to work at the University Hospital as a Nurse's Aide. George, at that time, was working in Edmonton. They were married in 1963 and lived in the city

**They really didn't like living in the city and decided to return home.**

for about ten months. George and Irene both felt they really didn't like living in the city and decided to return home. They lived for a year with George's parents and then bought their own quarter. There was a home on the land and although there was electricity, there was no running water. The well they used was very low and necessitated melting snow for water.

Although there were a few more comforts for George and Irene Karpyshyn in 1964, than there were for their grandparents in 1909 — life on the farm without running water was still demanding. Their pioneer background had given Irene and George a strong work ethic. They

**Their pioneer background had given them a strong work ethic.**

had both grown up to realize that hard work is necessary before any measure of success can be achieved



ed and they were not scared of putting in a good day's work.

George and Irene raised wheat, barley, pigs and some cattle on their farm and George also worked at Vilna Motors and drove the school bus. In May 1980, George



## George and Irene Karpyshyn



*George and Irene Karpyshyn at the UFA Agency in Spedden.*

Karpyshyn became the UFA Agent at Spedden. Irene works at the Agency full time and George does all the deliveries. Whatever needs doing at the Agency, Irene does — even though she remembers surprising a customer who, when she filled the pumps from the docks said, "It's the first time I saw a woman do that."

Both Irene and George have brothers and sisters who live in the vicinity and are all mostly involved with farming. George and Irene have moved from where they started although they are in the same area. They are only 1½ miles off the highway and have a new home just 3½ years old that they are still working on.

Their daughter Eva recently completed Grade 12 and their son Anthony who is fifteen years old now does a lot of the farming. Anthony is an avid hockey player and his team, the Vilna Lions Minor Hockey Team, did well in the series and won two tournaments. Anthony won the award for the best goalie in the league. George also loves hockey and has coached minor hockey for several years. Last year they didn't have a league in the area but the Karpyshyns are hopeful they'll have one this year.

George and Irene Karpyshyn don't feel they do anything very differently from any other Agent and George doesn't think it is too demanding to haul seven days a week or until late at night, if necessary. He's out to give the best of service and gladly accepts any long hours that this may demand.

The United Farmer salutes George and Irene Karpyshyn, descendants of the pioneers who were the bedrock of Alberta as Agents of the Month.

# First Open Steer Show Draws Strong Support



Dave Groeneveld.

A Charolais cross steer, exhibited by **L.V. Ranch** and **San Dan Charolais Farms**, Erskine, Alberta, captured the Grand Champion banner and \$5,000 prize money in the First Stampede Steer Classic.

The event, sponsored by **United Farmers of Alberta** and the **Calgary Exhibition and Stampede**, offered over \$10,000 in prize money.

**Dave Groeneveld**, Chairman of the Commercial Cattle Committee, in discussing the Steer Classic

**"For a steer show it was dramatic right to the end."**

said, "Nobody left the stands — for a steer show it was dramatic right to the end."

Dave and his committee consisting of **Tom Copithorne**, Cochrane; **Steve Dorran**, Carstairs; **Teri Fletcher**, Airdrie; **Chuck Groeneveld**, High River; **Bill Hartall**, Strathmore; **Bruce Hubbard**, Vulcan; **John Lee**, Calgary; **David Pope**, High River; **Greg Rockafellow**, Blackie; and **Lynn Thornton**, Calgary, came up with the idea to promote a Steer Show.

They knew that the Regina Agribition, Houston, Denver and other areas had big steer shows, so the committee felt it was about time it was tried in Calgary. They felt that the summer would be a good time to display and promote the steers as the Stampede had everything the show needed — the people, the consumer and the exhibitor. Another consideration was that the 4H clubs in Alberta were basically finishing their year's projects in the early part of June and they hoped that many of these top steers would come to the show. The committee also had as objectives the promotion of youth in agriculture and showing what is done in producing beef. They realized that a Steer Show couldn't do it all, but they felt it would get the breeders and consumers together.

After the show was over Dave Groeneveld said, "It was the first time around for this type of show in Calgary and we were very nervous. Our first hurdle was to get sufficient entries. Then we considered using a different judging format. We wanted an Alberta organization to help us promote the



Dusty Beaton of Raymond, proud of her friend, the Reserve Champion.

show — and the underlying and major objectives were to focus attention on the Alberta beef industry and to promote the 4H program — to give the 4H youth a bit more of an economic target for their projects, to let the 4H members compete against adults and to learn together with the adults that there is competition and stiff competition in the outside world.

**"There is competition and stiff competition in the outside world."**

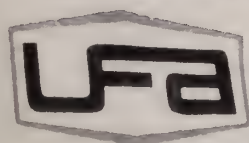
We didn't really have a budget to work from so we had to squeeze a bit. There was a rather short time to put it together, but the end results were great. We had 50 entries — that gave us four classes. There were tremendous crowds — the bleachers were filled. This showed two things: one, the show is a must and secondly the interest is definitely there! We had all kinds of people — the purebred breeders — the commercial man — the 4H youth. We feel we achieved the purpose of bringing some agriculture back to the Stampede and in a way, that is a learning process for the person walking down the barn alley. From the novice to the expert, they could see the animals clipped, trimmed and displayed.

To put a feather in United Farmers of Alberta's hat, if it wasn't for UFA and John Lee, we probably couldn't have put on the show. We give your Company credit for coming with us initially and now, other organizations are showing an interest for future shows.

I feel there's no excuse for not having a bigger show next year —



# STAMPEDE STEER CLASSIC



SPONSORED BY...

## UNITED FARMERS of ALBERTA



SUPPORTERS OF ALBERTA AGRICULTURE AND RURAL YOUTH

the acknowledgment of this one is certainly there. Next year, we're planning a superb show — we're hoping to get a budget and our advertising will be in place. We have already reserved space for 125 to 150 steers."

### Another Way of Judging

Bill Hartell, a member of the Commercial Cattle Committee made the suggestion that perhaps the steer show could be worked as a beauty contest. From this the committee came up with the idea of judging the steers in a way that would be a learning process plus an

**Work the steer show as a beauty contest.**

exciting final buildup. The judging format was unique — it was a first and could be a forerunner in steer exhibition. A well-known American

judge, **Professor Bill Able** from Kansas State University agreed to be the judge.

The new format in judging was that Professor Able didn't place the first four steers in each class. In the first four weight classes, he judged the 5th to the 12th steer — commented on each steer and left the top four steers unplaced for a final championship class. This left 16 unplaced steers, the actual class winners. The fourth place steer was then picked, then the third and the second and thirteen steers were left who were eligible for the \$5,000 first prize, \$2,000 second, \$1,500 third place and \$1,000 fourth place. The top four steers from each class were guaranteed the return of their entry fee.

Dr. Bill Able commented, "For the first show of its kind, I thought the entries were exceptionally

good. The frame, growth and muscle displayed in the steers was very strong."

**The frame, growth and muscle displayed in the steers was very strong.**

Dave Groeneveld and his committee were enthused about the show and its acceptance. He said, "Our committee felt that there should be more cattle on display as part of Agriculture-Country Style. With the help of sponsors **United Farmers of Alberta** and the **Calgary Exhibition and Stampede** we were able to put together a first-class show. As a result of the success of the Stampede Steer Classic Show and the support it has drawn, the committee is confident that next year's offering will feature more entries from a wider variety of exhibitors."



**Grand Champion Steer Award**

Left to right: John Lee, Calgary; Dave McNally, Stettler; Jennifer and Shelley Wilson, Erskine; Dr. Bill Able, Manhattan, Kansas; Bill Wilson, Erskine; at the halter, Brett Walters, Aldersyde and Don Pochylko, Erskine.

# New Delegate

## Paul B. Peterson



In order to qualify as a United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative District Delegate, the person nominated for that position must be a member or officer of a Co-operative Association.

Paul Peterson is the Delegate elected in 1983 to represent

Wetaskiwin Co-op Refineries Limited which is an affiliated co-operative of UFA. He has been a member of this board since 1969 and vice-president since 1975.

Born in Provost, Mr. Peterson has lived on the family farm in the Wetaskiwin area since 1928 and raises grain. He is active in community and agricultural organizations and has served as treasurer of Rosebrier Home and School Association for three years; on the Alberta Wheat Pool local delegates advisory committee for six years; on the Wetaskiwin Agricultural Society board for three years (one year as treasurer) and as a UFA Delegate Nomination/Advisory Committee member for five years.

He is a member of the Wetaskiwin Co-op Seed Cleaning Plant; the Westaskiwin Co-op Association; the Battle River R.E.A.; the Battle River Natural Gas Co-op Association and the Alberta Wheat Pool.

Mr. Peterson and his wife Adele have two children Diane and Larry. Mrs. Peterson is employed full time at the local newspaper, the Wetaskiwin Times. The family is active in their church, the Malmo Mission Covenant Church and have held various offices throughout the years. Mr. Peterson also participates in activities of the Red Cross, such as canvassing for funds. For hobbies he enjoys photography and wood working.

# New Agents

## Rea F. James



Taking over the Hanna Agency, after the untimely death of his

father, veteran agent Wes James, is Rea James.

Born in Hanna, Rea went to school in Hanna, Red Deer and Calgary. He worked with his father for many years and was also in partnership with him in a local trucking business.

Rea and his wife Debbie have three young children, Casey, Krista and Angela. Debbie keeps very busy as a homemaker and with the children's activities.

Rea is a member of the local Elks Club and enjoys skiing. He is the third generation of the James' family in Hanna. His grandfather was the local school teacher for many years; his father Wes was the UFA Agent in Hanna for over fifteen years and now Rea, as of June 23rd, 1983, is the UFA Petroleum Agent in Hanna.

Every success to you in your business, Rea.

## Garry W. Perrin



Appointed UFA Agent at Fort Macleod is Garry Perrin. He replaces John Yanco, who has been the competent and conscientious Agent at Fort Macleod since 1974 and is still helping out at times at

the Agency.

Garry is from the Fort Macleod area (the home of Leroy Fjorbotten, Alberta's Minister of Agriculture.) He attended school there and then went on to the Olds Agricultural College. He has been involved with farming for over 20 years — on his own farm and for the last fifteen years, he has also leased 3,000 acres on the Blood Reserve.

Both Garry and his wife Rowena are active in their community. Garry is a Past Master of the Masonic Lodge in Fort Macleod and an Associate Guardian of the Interna-

tional Order of Job's Daughters. Rowena, who takes care of the bookkeeping at the Agency, is Guardian Secretary of the International Order of Job's Daughters, a Worth Matron of the Eastern Star, a member of the Country Beaver Ladies Club and a Sunday School teacher.

The Perrins have three children, Dana, Darcee and Leanne.

When his busy schedule allows, Garry likes to hunt, camp, fish and ski, both snow and water.

Every success to you in your new business as UFA Agents in Fort Macleod, Garry and Rowena.



# Couldn't Farm Without Her

## Pioneer Women

Women played a demanding role in the opening of the west. Standing beside each frontiersman was a capable woman shouldering a full share of the tremendous task of opening up a new home in the wilderness.

**Shouldering her full share of forging a home in the wilderness.**

She shared the drudgery and hard labor of farm and home with her husband. Beyond their normal duties most women were also called on to assist with heavier tasks that were beyond the capability of one person in carving a farmstead from the virgin territory.

The first farm kitchens were basic and rudimentary. The farm wife's stove was often an open fire-place and meal preparation could be an arduous and smokey chore. It was a hard way to cook — the kettles were heavy and in the process, smoke would get into eyes, hair would often be singed, fingers blistered and clothing scorched.

**Hair was singed, fingers blistered and clothing scorched.**

The most important utensil was the dinner pot, a stewing kettle that held five to ten gallons and weighed 20 or more pounds. Into this went meat and vegetables for the hearty stews that sustained frontier men. The quantity of food was more important than what was eaten.



*Mrs. Hugh Beynon Biggs cutting oats with team and mower at Beynon, Alberta, 1909.*

Changes in the preparation of food were often noted and from these culinary explorations, the first pioneer cookbooks were written. Women who came up with good recipes, recorded them and passed them on to friends and neighbors. There were also tips in these collections of favorite recipes on preserving and salvaging food. A tip in one old cookbook listed this method of saving tainted venison. "Bury it in the ground in a clean cloth for a whole night and it will take away the corruption, savour and stink."

By the turn of the 20th century, when Alberta's flood of immigration was at its peak, conditions had changed considerably for the better, but labor saving devices were still far in the future. Day to day tasks still entailed a great deal of hard hand labor — a far cry from what might be considered acceptable in today's society.

Although the 20th century pioneer had advanced from fire-place cookery to a stove, her sod or log home was no improvement over earlier homes. In fact many were rushed to beat the onset of winter and were makeshift.

Household tasks were magnified by the absence of all conveniences. Water had to be pumped or hauled and heated for washing or any use that required hot or warm water. Hand washing or operating a hand-powered washer made wash day an endurance test that ran neck and neck with ironing which was accomplished with stove-heated appropriately named "sad irons."

Loneliness was also the constant companion of the women on isolated farms. It was a problem multiplied many times when World War I broke out in 1914 and many settlers answered the call to arms leaving women and children at home alone.

**Loneliness was a constant companion of women on isolated farms.**

In the era of horseback or horse and buggy doctors, medical help was not always available and women found themselves in another role — administering to the sick and injured.

Despite the hardships faced, our pioneering parents and grandparents stubbornly clung to their precarious hold on the new land and Alberta today is a tribute to their courage and determination.

*Pictures courtesy of Glenbow Archives, Calgary.*



*House going up — 1900.*



*Pioneer woman churning butter at Springfield Ranch, 1908.*



# Beula Lohr – A Lady of Distinction

The time was 1903. The North family, mother, father and two children left South Dakota, U.S.A. to immigrate to the North West Territories.



*Beula Lohr and her good neighbor and friend, Martha Kruger.*

Settlers were needed in the Territories and Canadian Immigration was encouraging people to come to this vast, new land that was just being opened up. There were special immigrant trains and the North family with all their belongings, including cattle, travelled 1,500 miles to reach what would become their new home. It was virgin country, no roads, no fences or bridges.

**It was virgin country – no roads, fences or bridges.**

When the North family arrived in the Erskine area, there were some other people living there but they were considered "squatters" and the Norths were the first to register and pay the \$10 homestead fee for a quarter of land. When Beula North was of school age, she walked to school, which was nearly two miles from her home, in both summer and winter. As times became a little better, the family bought a saddle horse and Beula and her brother rode to school. There has been a resurgence of horses in Alberta and they have now become a social animal. In Beula Lohr's day, she rode hundreds

of miles to school and getting a saddle horse meant that life was becoming a little easier. Occasionally, she was also privileged to get a ride in a cutter if someone was going by.

**Everyone was so busy making a living there wasn't time to worry about anything else.**

There was no organized recreation so the settlers made their own entertainment and had a good social life. Basically everyone was so busy making a living, there wasn't too much time to worry about anything else. There were many, many chores and the large garden was not only time consuming, it was a necessity.

But the settlers did manage to "neighbor" especially after more people got horses and buggies. You didn't travel too far from home with a horse and a buggy but everyone managed to keep in contact with their neighbors.

Beula North went to high school in Stettler and after graduation taught school for a year. She later married Lester Lohr, a neighbor and they went to live on their own place. Lester Lohr was also a pioneer of the area who had come from South Dakota with his family in 1900. The family travelled by train to Lacombe, which was as far as the train went and then continued on to what would later be known as the Erskine area. At the time, the area was part of the Northwest Territories and there really was very little there. It was virgin country — no roads or bridges. When you came to water, you forded it or if that wasn't possible, you had to swim. The land belonged to the crown and all contact with the government was made in Regina. No one owned their land as there had been no surveys and no guidance as to what land to settle on. So Lester's father, George, a rancher squatted on some land he chose and broke the sod. A few fam-

ilies came in 1902, but mostly they came in 1903 and 1904. The Lohrs were in the country about five years before they had to pay any taxes. The quarter of land that George Lohr had originally picked out and stayed on, eventually became his.

Homestead fees for a quarter section of land were ten dollars and the settlers were required to live on the land for six months of the year for three years. However, tolerances were made. Lester, when 18 years old, was allowed to claim a homestead, instead of waiting until 21 years of age, within a nine mile radius as long as he was living at home.



*Beula Lohr's home on the farmstead where she has lived for over fifty years.*

They had to break 30 acres instead of the usual ten acres. The family used his homestead for extra pasture, too. In 1906, Lester rode saddle horse to Red Deer to file his homestead claim. He went cross-country and forded the river and arrived in Red Deer on April 25, 1906. Although it had been a five-day trip and a lot of it on foot, he had to wait two days, until the morning of April 27, 1906, when he legally became 18 years to file his claim.

Alberta had become a province and although Lester Lohr had his homestead, he did not take up farming. He worked in lumber camps in the Crows Nest Pass, on crews that laid the first sewer in Lacombe, helped build the bridge at Content



on the Red Deer River and the Spiral Tunnel at Field, B.C. In 1910 with his father's help and approval, Lester registered at the Manitoba Agricultural College, the Alberta Government paying the tuition. There were 133 students registered in Agronomy and in 1915, 27 young men graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree and Lester was one of them. He worked for one year as an agricultural representative in Manitoba and then returned to Alberta and farming. In 1920 he married Beula North.

Lester had been batching for awhile and had a well dug on his place. A pail on a rope had to be lowered and it had to be flipped so it would fill up with water and then you had to flip up the pail to draw the water up. As Beula North said, "We were happy and thought that was a lot of fun and I got very professional at flipping the pail." It was the same

### **"Neighboring" also meant exchanging work.**

for everyone and "neighboring" meant more than just visiting. It also meant exchanging work. When anyone had a barn built, you would have a bee and everyone helped and as Beula remarked, "You worked but you could also have lots of fun." Threshing time was also a time for "neighboring" and if there was sickness, you had the knowledge and assistance of your neighbors. In the country, with a neighbor miles away, you appreciated that your neighbors were one of your most important resources and you knew you could depend on them.

### **Your neighbors were one of your most important resources.**

Lester and Beula Lohr's first real home was a three room plastered house. When they were married they lived for a while in Lester's log shack. Beula cooked for the carpenter who came to help and for her the emergence of her new home with its plaster walls was a thrill she's never forgotten.

The young couple didn't have a chance to get bored. Beula, as did the other women, did her own sew-

ing, churned the butter, gathered the eggs, set the hens and raised the turkeys and chickens. There were card parties and sometimes on a Sunday you would go to your neighbors, visit all day and stay for dinner and supper and then another time the neighbors would drop in on you and stay for the whole day. It was a full life — everyone worked hard and the main incentive was survival.

### **Everyone worked hard and the main incentive was survival.**

Beula and Lester Lohr did manage to make time for hobbies. Beula created jewellery from the Alberta rose. She would gather bushels and bushels of them (there were a lot of rose bushes on the unsettled prairie.) She would let the petals dry and then roll them into little balls in which she would make a hole with a long hat pin. She then threaded the balls into little rosary necklaces.



*One of the many barns at Sprucevale.*

From tin cans, miniatures of period furniture were made. This they did after they retired. Lester and she would get 64 strips from some tins, entwine them and fashion little chairs and sofas and then Beula would upholster the seats. They even had a bit of an orchard at one time. They started with some fruit trees and as Lester had some connections with the Morden Experimental Farm in Manitoba, Morden would send out samples of fruit trees for him to try and grow. From jesso, a material like plasticine, that you worked with a brush, picture frames, candlesticks and vases were made and of course there was always dressmaking and embroidering. Beula Lohr still has some examples of her many hobbies.

Another of Lester and Beula's activities is a marvellous heritage to the countryside. As far back as 1912, Lester Lohr began transplanting

### **Spruce trees — a marvellous heritage.**

spruce trees onto the home place from Red Deer River and Rocky Mountain House. There was no set plan but as the years passed, their son and daughter-in-law joined in the endeavor. Over 1,500 trees have been transplanted and set in the shelterbelt. Summer or winter they add their majestic beauty to Sprucevale Home, the name of the Lohr farming enterprise.

Lester Lohr, one of Alberta's agricultural pioneers died a few years ago. His son Lloyd and grandson Laverne run Sprucevale Home and there are now four generations of Lohrs living on the farm.

Beula lives alone in the house that Lester and she shared for many years. Her son and grandson's homes are only a few steps away. But Beula Lohr, slim and attractive, is still a very busy and involved lady, partaking in many community functions.

She has documented many of the handicrafts she has in her home — what year she made them and whom they are to be left to. She looks back on her busy life and says, "We had a good social life and plenty of it in the early days. We were so busy making a living that we didn't have time to worry or be bored. I sometimes feel that in today's world, you don't have to work as hard to earn a living and that has spoiled some of the incentive."

### **Some of the incentive has been spoiled.**

Beula Lohr may have more spare time but she is never bored. For her, pulling weeds and mowing lawn is good therapy — "it keeps your hypertension down, as you feel you are accomplishing something and you relax at the same time." She loves to read and her keen interest in people, her enthusiasm and alert mind make Beula Lohr a great lady of charm and distinction — one of Alberta's true pioneers.

# Season's Greetings

The approach of the Christmas season and all it means must surely lead to the contemplation of the blessings bestowed upon all of us.

We live in a part of the world that is traditionally peaceful. Although we may have political disagreements, we have the right of choice and the freedom to express ourselves. Because we live in a peaceful country, we can look forward with keen anticipation to the festive season and all its abundant joys.

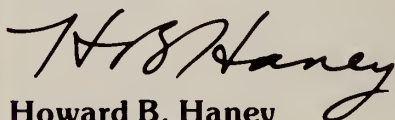
Our greetings from the first Christmas, "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men," continues to be the fervent wish among people of all faith. Let us hope the good Lord gives us all enough intelligence, tolerance and understanding to extend the Christmas spirit throughout the entire year.

May you and yours have the joyful Christmas that we all look forward to, and a New Year that fulfills your hopes and expectations.

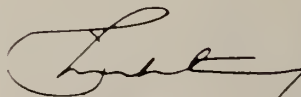
*"May the road wind sweetly before you,  
May the sun shine gently upon you,  
May the wind blow softly to your back,  
May the good Lord hold you  
in the hollow of his hand."*

*An old Irish blessing*

Sincerely,



Howard B. Haney  
President



Bill McCartney  
Chief Executive Officer